

**Culturally and Linguistically Competent Assessment Procedures
Companion Information Sheet to Podcast
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The following is meant to provide additional information to Head Start programs that will expand on the contents discussed on the podcast aired on February __, 2008 on Culturally and Linguistically Competent Assessments.

In what language will the assessment be conducted?

- It is helpful to have word lists that reflect the local use of language, including common idioms or child expressions (e.g. “Yuck!”)
 - Often, commercial assessments or curriculum developers include lists of words common to young children (see page 7 of Colorín Colorado’s ELL Starter Pack). I also suggest teachers expand on these lists to reflect local language usage. For instance, young Spanish speaking children often use the expression “Fuchi!” to indicate something is offensive in odor, taste, smell, or appearance and the term “Mimi” for “dormir” or “sleep”. There are many more such examples for Spanish as well as for any other language, including English.
- When bilingual personnel is not available to conduct the assessment, make sure you have secured trained interpreters to assist
 - It is fairly common for support staff to be asked to serve as interpreters merely because they have the ability to speak in English and another home language. However, being bilingual does not guarantee that one will be a good interpreter, especially to convey technical terminology and abstract concepts that are part of assessments. It is best to access the services of person trained in interpreting or with an interpreting certification. (see NASP source)

Have you taken into consideration possible cultural incongruencies?

- Be sure to identify possible gender or culturally ‘tabooed’ items. For example, some families have strong preferences as to what a girl or boy should play with and thus a child may hesitate or refuse to use a toy that is not ‘meant’ for him/her
 - The more obvious examples here would be to avoid asking boys to engage in play with dolls or pretend house play that some families have deemed not suitable for boys. There may be other types of games or activities that a particular family may take offense to and usually this type of

information is best gathered through the process of establishing rapport with the family prior to conducting an assessment with the child.

Have you acknowledged any potential biases or shortcomings in the assessment report?

- Acknowledge when child was not reflective of children in norming sample of the assessment tool being used as some translated tools have been normed for example on children from one country or national origin (e.g. Mexico or Mexican-American) and then implemented on a child from a different country or national origin (e.g., Puerto Rico or Puerto Rican).
- Acknowledge if bilingual/bicultural professional was/was not present. When no one that was familiar with the child's language and/or culture is able to be present, the team can acknowledge that there may have been some items assessed that were not reflective (or respectful) of the child's culture.
- Acknowledge when any part of assessment was done via an interpreter as this may explain why the assessment took longer than usual, why some items needed to be reworded, etc.
- Acknowledge less than ideal conditions for implementing assessment such as holding the assessment in a crowded room, not having access to all necessary materials, having unexpected interruptions (fire drill, calls) during the assessment, starting 30 minutes later than scheduled, any of which may have impacted the end results of the assessment.

Additional helpful tips

- Prepare any participant of the assessment ahead of time (e.g. offer the interpreter copies of the assessment in English ahead of time so that s/he may have the specialized terms ready at his/her fingertips)
 - The time to explain roles at the assessment is not the day of the assessment. Ideally, the person taking the lead for coordinating everyone's participation at an assessment situation will have had the time to clearly explain to each person participating or present what role they should play, where they should sit, how much they should engage the child or family, what is expected of them after the assessment is over, etc. In this manner, the flow of person will run more smoothly and potential misunderstanding or overwhelming of the child can be avoided.